

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 863
By: Watson
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Although dual credit courses are widely used across the state, it has been noted that the state does not have adequate data on the costs associated with these programs for the public high schools implementing them or the students enrolled in them. S.B. 863 seeks to provide the state with adequate information to address cost outliers and understand any barriers to access associated with costs faced by students by providing for an ongoing study to examine costs associated with dual credit courses at these schools.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of education in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 863 amends the Education Code to require the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to conduct an ongoing study for purposes of examining costs associated with dual credit courses offered at public high schools. The bill provides certain required actions for TEA in conducting the study and authorizes TEA to contract with any public or private entity to conduct the study. The bill requires TEA to submit to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of representatives a report on the results of the study not later than December 1 of each even-numbered year beginning in 2020 and sets out the required contents of the report. The bill authorizes the commissioner of education to adopt rules as necessary to administer the bill's provisions. TEA is required to implement a provision of the bill only if the legislature appropriates money specifically for that purpose, and TEA may, but is not required to, implement a provision using other appropriations if the legislature does not appropriate money specifically for that purpose.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2019.